

AT HOME WITH

SAGE

FALL 2019

1 SAGE'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

2 WASTE-FREE DINING

John Burroughs School

6 IN THE KITCHEN WITH SAGE

The Shipley School

8 LOCAL SOURCING

10 SUSTAINABLE HARVESTING

12 TASTE OF ITALY



THE SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE

A Note from SAGE House



We're happy to announce that beginning this fall, we're eliminating the use of plastic straws in all communities we serve.

Welcome back to school, and welcome to the sustainability issue of At Home with SAGE!

It's a SAGE standard to cook locally sourced food, from scratch, in small batches. We use wholesome ingredients to make every meal — including items we purchase from local farms like No Antibiotics Ever (NAE) chicken, fresh fruits and vegetables, and tofu made from local purveyors. When we put your community's interests first, we're also putting the environment first. You get deliciously prepared, fresh meals, your local economy thrives, and together, we save energy and cut back on fossil fuel emissions.

We're happy to announce that beginning this fall, we're eliminating the use of plastic straws in all communities we serve. And, we're compiling a list of resources that our communities can reference if they're looking to dine more sustainably — from starting a campus garden to

converting used frying oil into biodiesel fuel.

If you're trying to be more sustainable at home, read about the successful efforts at John Burroughs School in St. Louis, Missouri and The Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. You'll find simple tips you can implement right away. If you want more information about sourcing organic, conventional, and local produce, check out the From Our Dietitians article.

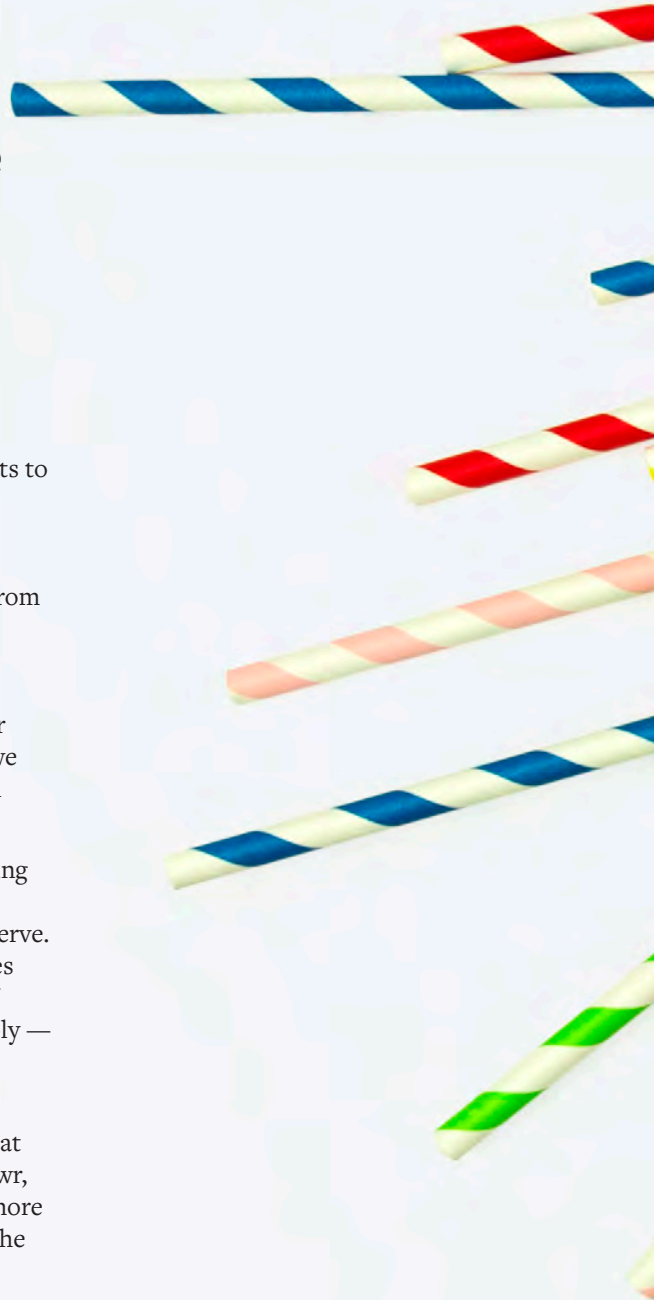
Don't forget to start conversations with your child to build awareness about sustainability. Ask if there was a From Near. From Here. sign or an Organic chalkboard next to the items they enjoyed for lunch. You might be surprised what you learn about where their food came from!

We look forward to serving your students with fabulous, nutrient-dense meals, made sustainably. Here's to another successful year!

Sincerely,

Published twice annually by the SAGE Marketing Department.

For extra web content, go to sagedining.com/athome when you see this symbol: 





Our Commitment to Sustainability

SAGE Dining Services® is a leader in sustainable practices. As stewards for the environment, we partner with our clients to make responsible choices and develop innovative solutions that have a positive impact on people and the planet. Our approach includes making food from scratch using responsibly sourced ingredients purchased from local and regional suppliers; educating guests about where and how their food is grown; assisting with campus gardens and incorporating harvests into meals; encouraging trayless dining, waste reduction, recycling, and composting; reducing energy consumption; using cooking oil for biofuel; supporting fair trade practices; and paying fair wages and benefits.



2 At Home with SAGE | Fall 2019



WHAT WASTE-FREE DINING LOOKS LIKE

*District Manager Shelli Pate (l) and
Food Service Director Ginger
Humphrey (r) in the John Burroughs
School dining hall.*

In school dining communities, it's easy to see how much food doesn't get eaten. Trash bags can fill up fast — and a majority of what's discarded doesn't have to end up in a landfill. But school dining is also one of the best settings for successful waste reduction programs. At John Burroughs School (JBS) in St. Louis, Missouri, they've reached the gold standard in school dining sustainability, achieving nearly 100% waste-free dining.

Environmental awareness is deep-rooted at JBS, a coeducational school for grades 7-12 named after the American naturalist John Burroughs, who said, "I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order." Everyday practices include recycling discarded electronic devices and lightbulbs, using green cleaning products, and designating special parking spaces for carpooling and energy-efficient cars. The campus garden is maintained by the gardening class, and the school's physical plant vehicles (lawn mowers and tractor) are fueled by biodiesel produced in the science department from the kitchen's used grease.

It's no wonder that their dining program, which serves approximately 630 students and 150 faculty members, is impressively green.

SAGE District Manager Shelli Pate was the Food Service Director at Burroughs for 14 years. In 2011, when the school decided to make sustainability a top priority, the administration turned to her to discuss sustainability in the dining hall. Shelli said, "They were amazed by what was already being done, but we took it to the next level."

According to Shelli, the real game changer for JBS was switching to single-stream recycling and composting — all recyclables go into one bin, and all compostable materials go in another.

That's resulted in three 75-gallon bins of compostable material picked up three times a week by Blue Skies Recycling.

Composting at JBS means putting everything that's not eaten at lunch, including biodegradable napkins and food scraps, into a bin. That's resulted in three 75-gallon bins of compostable material that's picked up three times a week by Blue Skies Recycling and delivered to St. Louis Composting to be turned into nutrient-rich soil.

You won't find a plastic bottle in JBS' single-stream recycling containers — they've all but eliminated them on campus. Students bring their own

water bottles and fill up throughout the day at water dispensers. When it's necessary to serve to-go water, guests are provided cans or cartons only.

Shelli points out that sustainable dining communities are more aware. "We all have a habit that when we're walking past a trash can, we just put whatever we have to throw away in it. At Burroughs, it took just a little bit of community training to get people into the habit of thinking about where things go. The students were involved in the training as well, so it didn't take too long." And, signage helps. All bins at JBS are clearly labeled.

Sustainability in K-12 independent school dining is becoming the norm, not the exception. And colleges are not just sustainable, they're often leading the way in sustainability — using data-driven goals to make annual improvements campuswide, including in the dining hall. In a few years, we expect the efforts at John Burroughs to be standard operating practice, and we look forward to sharing many more waste-free dining success stories.

Here's how the JBS community dines sustainably:

- Composts all food and waste materials from the kitchen and dining room.
- Provides biodegradable paper towels, plates, flatware, and cups or items that can be washed.
- Uses bulk milk and juice dispensers in lieu of single cartons.
- Recycles used cooking oil into biodiesel fuel.
- Harvests an on-site herb garden featuring three dozen herbs, four edible flowers, and three apple espaliers for lunch and catering events.
- Cooks food grown year-round in the greenhouse. Items include swiss chard, strawberries, cucumbers, and peppers.
- Sources locally grown foods.
- Utilizes water bottle refilling stations and water coolers.

On Our Shelves



Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't

All SAGE Managers will be reading this book in preparation for The Institute 2020, our companywide professional development in December. Jim Collins shares his revelations from a five-year research study "to explore the inner workings of good to great."



The Way We Eat Now: How the Food Revolution Has Transformed Our Lives, Our Bodies, and Our World

This #1 best seller in Amazon's Nutrition category by food journalist Bee Wilson explores how "For most people across the world, life is getting better but diets are getting worse."



The Food Lab: Better Home Cooking Through Science

A fantastic textbook/cookbook by J. Kenji López-Alt, seriouseats.com's chief culinary consultant and author of the popular "The Food Lab" column. Both science geeks and foodies will love it!

In the Kitchen with SAGE



Wayne Washington, SAGE Food Service Director at The Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania knows a thing or two about eco-friendly dining. Shipley's Avery Silverman Dining Room recently received the 3 Star Certified Green Restaurant® recognition by the Green Restaurant Association (GRA), a national nonprofit that helps restaurants become more environmentally sustainable through stringent certification standards.

This has meant a significant annual savings at Shipley: now they use 9,400 gallons less water (equivalent to over 65,800 water bottles), spend \$8,296 less in energy and water bills, and divert 90% of their waste with recycling and composting.

Sustainable dining isn't just about what you throw away — it's also about what you eat, and how it's made. Vegetarian and vegan meals require significantly less energy and water to produce than meat-based dishes. At Shipley, *46% of their main dishes are vegetarian or vegan*. One of the favorite recipes among faculty, staff, and students is Sweet and Sour Tofu. It's so popular, *Wayne buys 50-60 pounds of tofu a week!*

Wayne shares some tips from Shipley that you can try at home:

- "If you're brave, take your trash and spread it out on a tarp in your backyard so your family can see everything they're throwing away. Your kids might get grossed out, but they'll also be surprised at how wasteful they are."
- "I learned that if someone has to walk seven or more steps to a recycling bin, they're less likely to make the effort to recycle. At Shipley, I put a recycling bin within just a few steps of most of our kitchen traffic. You can do this at home, too. Put your recycling bins front and center."
- "If you use paper towels or napkins, purchase holders that dispense one at a time. We switched to these, and it's really cut down on my purchases — I'm buying napkins every two weeks now, instead of weekly."



It's about changing what we're using, but it's also about changing the mindset of how we're using it.

Wayne Washington in The Shipley School servery.

House-Made Sweet & Sour Sauce



Yields: 2 cups / Prep Time: 10 minutes / Total Time: 30 minutes

3/4 cup pineapple

1/2 red bell pepper

1/2 green bell pepper

2/3 cup carrots

1 cup water

2 tablespoons and 2 teaspoons white vinegar

6 tablespoons granulated sugar

1/4 cup tomato paste

2 1/4 teaspoons cornstarch

Step 1: Dice bell peppers and pineapple; slice carrots.

Step 2: Combine all ingredients in saucepan; mix well.

Step 3: Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally.

Step 4: Lower heat and continue to cook for 15 minutes or until sauce reaches desired consistency.



Fried Sweet & Sour Tofu



Serves: 6 / Prep Time: 15 minutes / Total Time: 30 minutes

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 medium green bell pepper
1 small onion
Half a pineapple

2 tablespoons cilantro (1/2 bunch)
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
13 1/2 ounces firm tofu

2/3 cup cornstarch
2 cups house-made sweet and sour sauce
1/4 cup water (as needed)

Step 1: Dice bell pepper, onion, and pineapple. Chop cilantro.

Step 2: Drain tofu and cut into 1/2-inch cubes.

Step 3: Dredge tofu in cornstarch.

Step 4: Heat 1 teaspoon oil in large skillet over medium-high heat.

Step 5: Fry tofu in skillet until it forms a light crust. Rotate tofu to fry evenly.

Step 6: Remove tofu and drain on paper towels or rack. Set aside. Discard oil from skillet.

Step 7: Add remaining oil to the skillet. Add onions, pineapple, and peppers.

Step 8: Sauté briefly until cooked but crunchy (approximately 5 minutes).

Step 9: Add tofu, cilantro, and sweet and sour sauce to skillet with vegetables.

Step 10: Add water until desired consistency is reached. Heat through.

Step 11: Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Q & A with SAGE's Procurement Department

Being sustainable means setting goals, doing research, and being resourceful. Even for a family, it can be a lot of work at first. So, how does SAGE help each of our 275 communities meet their sustainability goals? Vice President of Procurement Todd Evans and Purchasing Representative Gena Szeliga discuss some of what goes on behind the scenes.

1. Sourcing locally is a SAGE cornerstone. 40% of SAGE purchases are manufactured, produced, or grown within a 150-mile radius of the communities they supply. Some SAGE communities have achieved impressive local sourcing stats, like 70 – 80%. How do you help them reach these numbers, and why does local sourcing matter?

Gena: We help by researching every local purveyor to make sure their products meet our standards. We research everything — eggs, milk, bakery products, meats, servingware, cleaning products, composting companies. Every local purveyor is different, and the regulations at the local and state levels are also different. It can be a challenge, because some of the smaller vendors don't have the credentials we need. And sometimes it's more than just vendors we're researching. I spent an entire summer putting together resources for regulations for on-site chicken pens.

Todd: We don't limit the number of local suppliers we purchase from, and we're always getting new ones on board. We have approximately 800 vendors, and most of them, even the large grocery distributors, are family-owned. So, the impact of our local spend is real. This makes a big difference to the smaller farms, the local economies, and their tax bases. Purchasing locally also reduces fossil fuel consumption. Our food isn't traveling long distances.

2. Sustainability is a hot topic, and it's changing rapidly. What are some of the changes you're seeing? What's remained a constant at SAGE?

Todd: We're seeing more and more changes in local legislation — bans on plastic straws, Styrofoam, and more. Our Managers keep us aware, so we can do the research and adjust course if we haven't already. Beginning this fall, we're no longer using plastic straws or stirrers in any of our venues.

What's been constant at SAGE is that we've always worked closely with individual communities to meet their goals. We always give them all the information they need to make informed decisions.

Also, we've always been directed by our mission. We're driven by what's the right thing to do, and the best quality product. For example, we recently began sourcing our tilapia from a vendor that raises lake-grown, antibiotic-free fish. They support the social and economic health of their local community. This is important to us.

3. What do you think the future holds for sustainable procurement?

Todd: I think we're going to see a significant evolution in packaging — less packaging and plastic, particularly within the snack and beverage industries. We'll see an

40% of SAGE purchases are manufactured, produced, or grown within a 150-mile radius of the communities they supply.

emphasis on less post-consumer waste, more compostable packaging, and more upcycling, or creative reuse. Also, we're seeing more and more protein-based food that mimics meat, and I think that will continue.



Executive Chef Rob Coutu receives an order for a catering event.

From Our Dietitians

Considerations for Sourcing Produce



As a consumer, you have more choices than ever in sourcing produce — local, organic, or conventional — or a combination of all three. Here are some things to consider when buying produce for your family:

Sourcing locally

- Local food has a smaller carbon footprint than food traveling long distances.
- Good sources include farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, and even large grocery stores (look for local farm signage).
- Smaller local farms might use organic practices but don't have official recognition because certification costs can be expensive.
- Shopping locally can give you an appreciation for your community's unique harvests — you might discover a regional delicacy you've never tried.

Sourcing organic

- Organic farming reduces runoff, conserves natural resources, improves biodiversity, and maintains soil health. Organic produce produces lower yields than

conventionally grown produce, requires more land to grow, and might have to be transported long distances.

- Organic produce can be 25-100% more expensive than nonorganic varieties.

Sourcing conventional

- Conventional produce is generally accessible in terms of cost and location.
- There's a solid body of evidence supporting the overall safety of conventional produce. The EPA enforces strict requirements on conventional growing practices to protect human health.

The most important consideration? Eat enough fruits and veggies!

Only 12% of adults and 40% of children are regularly meeting the FDA's daily fruit recommendations, and only 9% of adults and 7% of children are meeting daily vegetable recommendations.

Regardless of how they're grown, they're crucial for everyone's health and well-being.

Tips for Making Sustainable Purchases in Your Community:

From Purchasing Representative Gena Szeliga:

"Look for validation. Make sure there are certification stamps from third parties. The information we see on packaging is becoming more transparent, and consumers are driving this."

"Find out: Is this business in good standing? What does the community think of them? Are they good neighbors? Local reputation means a lot."

"Always inquire about origin. Some local shops, for example, proudly say where their seafood comes from, and even how the origin affects the flavor. If you don't see signs about origin, ask. If they can't tell you, that's a problem."



SUSTAINABLE HARVESTING

As fall approaches, you may be wondering what to do with your garden's abundant harvest. You're giving away lots of squash, your colanders are overflowing with ripe tomatoes, and your family is tired of eating Eggplant Parmesan.

But there's another simple and sustainable option — food preservation. It reduces food waste from large harvests, cuts back on carbon emissions from cross-country shipping and grocery shopping, and allows you to enjoy your veggies well into the winter.

FREEZE

It's best to freeze veggies when they're at peak flavor. If possible, harvest in the morning and then freeze within a few hours. Vegetables that freeze well include asparagus, broccoli, green beans, sweet peppers, and summer squash.

Wash and blanch vegetables by steaming or scalding in boiling water. Blanching is a necessary step that cleanses vegetables and ensures they keep their color, flavor, and texture — not to mention their vitamins.

Each vegetable has a different ideal blanching time:

- Asparagus - 4-5 minutes steam or 3-4 minutes in water.
- Broccoli - 3-4 minutes steam or 2 minutes in water.
- Green Beans - 2-3 minutes steam or 2 minutes in water.
- Sweet Peppers - no blanching necessary.
- Summer Squash - 2-3 minutes steam or 1-2 minutes in water.

Pack in freezer bags or containers.

Label with freezing date and store.

DRY

Dried veggies are perfect for soups or snacking. Drying, which removes moisture from food to stop the growth of bacteria and yeast, works best in low humidity, low heat, and with good air circulation. Vegetables that dry well include tomatoes, green beans, and peas.

You can purchase a food dehydrator or try these methods:

To dry in oven:

Wash and blanch vegetables by steaming or scalding in boiling water for a short period of time.

Each vegetable has a different ideal blanching time:

- Tomatoes - 3 minutes steam or 1 minute in water.
- Green Beans - 2-3 minutes steam or 2 minutes in water.
- Peas - 3 minutes steam or 2 minutes in water.

Cut into halves or strips about $\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Be sure to trim away seeds and cores. Place vegetables on a baking sheet.

Put oven on "keep warm" setting. Leave the oven door propped open a few inches and place a fan near the outside of the oven door for air circulation. Check every few hours; vegetables are considered dried when they are crispy and brittle.

Drying times vary depending on if dehydrator or oven is used.

- Tomatoes - 6-24 hours.
- Green beans - 8-14 hours.
- Peas - 8-10 hours.

Cool completely and store in glass jars or plastic freezing containers in a dark, cool location. It's best to pack dried veggies in amounts that can be used all at once.

To air dry (works well for herbs and hot peppers):

Wash and dry. Tie in a bundle and suspend in a well-ventilated area.

For more information about freezing and drying produce, check out the National Center for Home Food Preservation at nchfp.uga.edu.

A Taste of Italy

Pasta Primavera with Marinara





One of the best things about preparing Italian meals is the accessibility of ingredients. Even if you don't have an abundance of tomatoes or squash from a garden, all of the ingredients in this simple, veggie-packed dish are quick and easy to find — most are probably already in your fridge waiting to be used!

Pasta Primavera with Marinara

Serves: 6 / Prep Time: 10 minutes / Total Time: 30 minutes

2 tablespoons vegetable oil	1 ¼ cups marinara sauce *
1 small carrot	¼ cup green peas
1 small yellow squash	⅛ teaspoon pepper
1 small onion	12 ounces farfalle pasta
½ medium tomato	Grated Parmesan cheese for serving
1 clove garlic, minced	

Step 1: Chop onion, carrot and tomato, and julienne squash.

Step 2: Cook pasta according to directions on packaging. Drain and set aside.

Step 3: In a large skillet, heat oil over low to medium heat.

Step 4: Add onions and garlic; sauté 2 minutes.

Step 5: Add carrots; sauté 5 minutes.

Step 6: Add squash and tomatoes; sauté 2 minutes.

Step 7: Add marinara sauce and peas. Heat through, 3-5 minutes.

Step 8: Add pasta and toss to combine.

Step 9: Serve with grated Parmesan.

* Marinara sauce options:

Buy: Use your favorite store-bought brand — look for sauces made with olive oil, with lower sodium, and without added sugars or saturated fats.

Make:

- Try making sauce partially from scratch using canned crushed tomatoes. ●
- Go for fresh: your family will taste the from-scratch difference. Use your garden's abundant harvest or purchase some locally grown tomatoes. ●



Chickens at Liberty
Delight, a natural
livestock farm in
Reisterstown, MD.
SAGE offers meat
from Liberty Delight
at several venues.

SAGE
DINING SERVICESSM
DEFINING THE STANDARD

